

### *Opens Fair at Delaware County Community College*

November 9, 2010

Media, Pa. – Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-07) commended Pennsylvania CareerLink and Delaware County Community College for their efforts to provide returning Veterans tools they need to succeed in civilian life as he helped kick off today's Veterans Job Fair and Support Services event at the school's STEM complex. With the unemployment rate for Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans well above the national average, the Congressman spoke about using today's event, as he has used his Veterans Summits and Young Vets Roundtables in the past, as examples of the good government that we need more of to give our Veterans the opportunities they deserve.

Through his engagement and casework for Veterans throughout the district, it has always been clear to Congressman Sestak and his staff that there were persistent problems in servicemembers' discharges, including: incomplete medical records; a lack of information provided about how to take advantage of the new GI Bill's education benefits; and a lack of assistance for their job search. Since 2007 he has worked with other Veterans in congress to resolve those challenges with great success. Since 2007 there have been dramatic increases in the appropriated funds to the VA; the 21st Century GI Bill and associated Yellow Ribbon Program have made a quality college education more accessible to Veterans. However, finding employment for recently discharged Veterans has remained complicated by the recession,

problems with USA Jobs.gov, and the lack of understanding regarding Veterans service preference programs. Therefore, Congressman Sestak collaborated with CareerLink's Delaware County office to require the VA to send CareerLink contact information for recently discharged Veterans. That single act enabled CareerLink to reach out and help Veterans jumpstart their job search efforts and could help Veterans nationwide get to work sooner following their discharge from the service.

“Pennsylvania CareerLink identified a problem and we worked together with the VA to fix it,” said Congressman Sestak. “This is an example of what is possible if public officials and organizations that provide services needed by our Veterans make the commitment to collaborate, share information, and work persistently to solve problems. While it has been critical to address the severe underfunding of the VA that took place prior to a record increase in 2007, in many cases it is not more funding that is needed, but more accountable and transparent use of the funding already provided.”

The jobs event was organized exclusively for Veterans and their spouses. More than 45 employers and more than 25 support organizations attended, including Veterans Administration representatives specializing in education benefits and business. The Congressman also took the opportunity to mention another important way we can honor those who have served.

“As Veterans Day is this week I request that everyone consider how participation in, and attendance at, parades and other ceremonies has declined in recent years,” said Congressman Sestak. “I believe that trend must be reversed—especially during wartime. Now, more than at any time since the Vietnam War, we should all pause to acknowledge the courage and sacrifice of those who have gone into harms way to preserve our freedoms. I fear that too many Americans are losing contact with what it means to be a Veteran and how much the support of the American public means to those who served in our armed forces.

*Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the U.S. Congress.*

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